

Never Broken, Never Trained (You Got Me In The Doghouse On This Dog Chain) by thegoblincity

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

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Summary:

*"At the dog pound make me beg,
got me with my tail between my legs."*

Billy lied to himself, told himself that he avoided confrontation with Harrington because he didn't want to get in trouble for hitting him again. Truth was, Billy was scared.

1. Chapter One

Author's Note:

I'm deep down the harringrove rabbit hole and this is the result.

Song title and summary lyrics are from the song *Treat Me Like The Dog I Am* by Motley Crue.

Because Billy is a self-hating bastard. Yep.

This is a work in progress BUT I'll finish this fic for sure because I'm too attached to these boys.

A special thank you goes to my friend Ari who took the time to beta-read this and gave me lots of ideas <3.

He fucked up. Jesus, he *fucked* up.

Billy replays the scene in his head, trying to pinpoint the words that made his father lash out at him this time. He always does that, failing every time.

He should've learned not to rationalize his father's beatings after so many years, yet he still tries.

Billy looks into the car's rearview mirror and considers his face: a swollen cheek and an eye that looks like it's going to blacken quite soon. *Could be worse*, he thinks.

He leans towards the passenger's seat to open the glove compartment, rummaging around until he finds the item he's looking for.

Glancing up to make sure no one's around – he made sure to park the car a few hundred meters away from the school, telling Max to skate the rest of the way, no questions asked – and takes out a small bag with makeup in it.

He should be good with just a bit of concealer and powder for now, though he might have to layer it up tomorrow, when the real bruises form. Again, could be worse, like that one time back in middle school when he had faked a fucking herpes infection due to a badly split, swollen lip. That had been a much harder job; especially when he had to buy makeup from the drugstore for the first time, telling the guy at the counter it was a present for his mom.

Billy is carefully starting to apply the beige cream to his cheek, wincing at the tenderness of the bruise, when he hears footsteps approaching. He scrambles to put everything back in the bag and shoves it under his seat.

He intends to check the car's side mirror to see who the intruder is, but when he turns his head, Steve Harrington is standing next to his car.

He rolls down the window.

"Hargrove". Steve greets him, voice flat and unbothered.

"Harrington."

Harrington hasn't really spoken to Billy since that night and they've avoided each other as much as possible.

As the weeks went by, Billy witnessed the slow fading of the bruises he had left on Harrington's face, feeling a pang of something like guilt every time Harrington winced or brought a hand up to his face to scratch at the angry marks.

Billy avoided him at basketball practice, he avoided him in the showers ("What happened to your face, Steve? Got a run in with an angry badger?" "Who did it, Steve, tell us and we'll kick his ass" – Steve never said anything to his mates, never mentioned Billy and his psychotic rage, laughed it off and casually hinted at a tumble down the stairs).

Billy lied to himself, told himself that he avoided confrontation with Harrington because he didn't want to get in trouble for hitting him *again*. Truth was, Billy was scared.

Scared of the possible consequences of his actions, sure – if Harrington told the authorities about it and his father heard about Billy's actions, he'd probably have to nurse a week of kicks in the ribs – but also scared of himself, of his fury.

That night at the Byers', he... he had lost control. He had grabbed the Sinclair kid and pushed him into a wall, just because he could, then Harrington had intervened and it felt like a fire was burning him from the inside, blood pounding through his veins.

All the pent-up rage in his body – rage towards his father, towards Susan and precious little Max who his father loved more than him, towards this whole fucking shithole of a town, towards *himself* - releasing all at once, making him punch Harrington's face over and over again.

Harrington's fucking pretty, perfect face.

King Steve with his lean body and luscious hair, his smell of spice and *man* that made Billy's mouth water, and he could never tell him and he could never do anything about it and he shouldn't even have those fucking *filthy* thoughts in the first place – thoughts that had stopped, for a while, before moving to Hawkins. After his father found a copy of the firefighters' calendar under his mattress and made him spit blood because of it. They had stopped.

And then Steve fucking Harrington had to come into his life– Billy was grateful that Max plunged the syringe into his neck, though he'd never tell her that.

Steve is panting lightly, face sweaty. He's wearing shorts and a light pullover. He's been jogging, Billy realizes. *Who the fuck jogs to school. Asshole.*

"Listen, I figure this is as good a time as any", Steve begins.

"To do what?" Billy doesn't know what the hell has gotten into the guy.

Steve takes a gulp of water from a bottle in his small backpack and Billy's eyes flicker down to follow the stretch of his throat.

"To talk."

"About what?"

Steve huffs, looking around, as if to share his amusement with a non-existent crowd.

"You know about what," he says, voice turning serious.

Billy feels like a deer caught in headlights and makes the mistake of angling his face fully towards Steve.

Steve frowns, confusion blooming on his face.

"What happened to your face?" he asks, tone unreadable.

Billy swears internally. "Mind your own business, Harrington."

Steve puts a hand on the car door, leaning forward.

"Hey. Dude, listen, I'm not trying to--"

"Mind your own. Fucking. Business, Harrington," he repeats in a low voice, holding Steve's gaze.

Steve's eyes turn suspicious. "Who did you beat up?" He asks, a hint of venom in his voice.

What.

"What?" It's Billy's turn to frown in confusion.

"You have bruises on your face, Billy. Who did you fight? Were they

your size, this time?"

Realization dawns on Billy and fury chokes his throat. Blind, white-hot fury.

He steps out of his car and slams the door.

"What if I did beat someone up, huh, Harrington? What's it to you? You gonna do something about it?" Billy smirks. He doesn't know what he's saying. He needs to get inside the car and drive to school, *right now*.

Steve stares at him, unmoveable, hands on his hips.

Billy is about to say yes. Yes, he did. He beat up a kid and laughed while doing it, is that what he wants to hear? Fuck him.

He looks at Steve, expecting to find anger written on his face, instead finding nothing but cold indifference. Like Billy is a parasite Steve has to deal with. A pungent feeling at the pit of his stomach replaces his fury and suddenly he can't breathe.

"I asked you a question," Steve insists.

"No." Billy leans against the side of the car, needing the support to stay upright.

"I don't believe you."

Billy snorts, bitter. "Too bad." His breath is coming faster, a stinging knot pulling at his throat.

"What happened to your face, then? Huh? Those aren't bruises you get from walking into a door."

Steve is crowding him, now, stepping closer and forcing Billy to look at him. Tension fills the air.

"*I don't believe you*," Steve repeats.

Billy shoves at Steve's shoulders, trying to put some space between them. It doesn't work; Steve plants his feet and pushes back.

I told you to plant your feet.

"Leave me the fuck alone, Harrington," Billy snarls, head swimming with dizziness.

Steve laughs mirthlessly. "Now you want me to leave you alone? After you beat my face in and almost killed me? That's not happening, Billy, that's not how this wor---"

Billy pushes himself off the car and launches forward, crushing his mouth against Steve's. He regrets it the moment their lips touch.

Steve's mouth is warm under his, but it's tense and Steve isn't moving. After a few seconds, Steve freezes and tears his mouth away, pushing Billy off of him.

Billy's back hits the car.

“What the hell are you doing?!” Steve is staring at him, a shocked expression on his face.

Panic fills Billy’s stomach, spreading to his limbs until the world starts spinning. He feels sick.

Billy jumps into his car, starts the engine and hits the pedal, back tires screeching loudly.

After a few hundred meters, he looks into the rearview mirror and sees Steve standing in the same spot, watching him drive away.

2. Chapter Two

Billy doesn't know what to do.

Two days have passed since his encounter with Harrington and nothing has changed; everyone in the school corridors still greets him and talks to him as usual, girls still swoon when he walks past them, the basketball team still considers him their best player. No one has painted slurs on his locker yet.

That should be a good sign. It should, but Billy knows better.

He knows that it's only a matter of time before Harrington decides to talk, to ridicule him in front of the entire school as retribution for the beating Billy gave him at the Byers'.

Even if he didn't want to take revenge, Harrington might still go ahead and expose him because he thinks people should know.

Billy is a *deviant*. His father has been telling him that for years, accentuating his words with his fists. He's a disgrace to the Hargrove name, and he should be ashamed. And Billy is.

He is disgusted by his own thoughts, by the dreams that come to him at night, dreams of hard muscles under his hands, of beard burns, of strong arms holding him in place.

He has tried, still tries, to ignore them, tries to be the perfect son his father wants, the true man his father wishes him to be. He flirts with girls, takes them on dates, kisses them softly on the lips and caresses their curves. Then he dumps them before anything really physical can happen and goes on to his next pray.

It's a cycle he's been repeating for years, and everyone believes he's a heartless playboy who likes to use innocent girls and break their hearts. That's exactly what Billy wants, and he's made an art of pretending.

Steve Harrington has been an unexpected obstacle in his way. A pebble in his boot, at first, quickly turning into a rock chained to his foot, holding him captive.

And now Billy has gone and given him the power to end him, to destroy the carefully crafted image Billy has built for himself and make his castle of lies crumble before everyone's eyes.

If the town knows, his father will too, and Billy can't have that happen. He fears the beating and the shouting that would come with it, of course, but he also doesn't want to move town again. Hawkins is a shithole, but Billy is respected here, treated like a champion by

his peers, and he feels powerful. He feels like a real man. He must deal with Harrington right away.

Billy waits for Harrington to leave the school's parking lot in his BMW and follows him in his own car, not bothering to be subtle about it.

Harrington drives for about five minutes, then pulls over. Billy parks behind him and gets out of the vehicle first, walking towards the BMW with a deliberately easy pace.

He needs to stay calm, assert his authority. His palms are sweating.

Steve gets out too and turns to face him.

"Why are you following me?"

Billy opens his arms and tilts his head to the side, offering a sneer.

"I just want to have a little chat. Make a couple of things clear."

Harrington rolls his eyes and runs a hand through his hair.

"If this is about the other day—"

"I don't know what you think happened, the other day," Billy snarls, pointing a finger at Steve's chest. "But if you say one fucking word about it, Harrington, if you so much as mention it to anyone, I swear you'll regret it. You have no idea."

Billy's hands are starting to shake. He shoves them in the pockets of his jacket.

Harrington is silent for a few seconds, brows raised. Then he shakes his head and *laughs*.

He laughs, and Billy's chest clenches.

"Hargrove, I'm done being threatened by you," Steve says, and he's *walking away*.

Before he can get in the car, Billy rushes forward and grabs Steve by the shoulders, spinning him around.

"You do not get to walk away from me."

Steve's expression is neutral. "I'm going to do exactly that, unless you want to beat me to a pulp again. I wonder what the police is going to say."

Billy gapes at him.

"I thought so." Steve pulls away from Billy, turning to open the car door.

Fuck. Fuck, shit, fuck.

"Wait." The words are out of Billy's mouth before he can think better of it. "Harrington, wait."

Steve stills. "What?"

Billy takes a few steps back and looks at the ground, worrying his bottom lip between his teeth.

"Please," he starts, voice low, defeated. "Do not tell anyone."

Harrington stares at him like Billy has just grown a second head in front of him.

"I'll stop bothering you," Billy continues, still not looking at Steve.

"You'll never have to talk to me again but please, if anyone comes to know... Just. Don't tell anyone about it. Don't tell *Max* about it."

Steve frowns. "Max?"

Billy looks up with a pleading expression. He's ashamed, humiliated. He feels like a joke.

"Do not tell her, please. If she talks again—"

"Again? What are you talking about?" Steve's frown gets deeper.

Billy realizes he has said too much. *Stupid, fucking stupid.*

He watches Steve get a look of sudden realization on his face, and Billy knows he has fucked up.

"Is this..." Steve takes a step forward, lowers his voice. "Is this about your father?"

Billy's blood freezes in his veins.

"What the fuck are you saying, Harrington?" He hisses. "Tread carefully, now."

Steve doesn't seem bothered by the warning.

"The night—the night we fought at the Byers'," he starts, a pondering look in his eyes. "I drove Max home in your car. She wouldn't let me park it in front of the house, told me to leave it a block away. When I asked why she said something about not wanting her stepfather – your father - to find out you'd lost and ruined the car, because 'she'd seen enough blood for one night'."

Billy can't move. He's shaking so hard it's like his whole body is vibrating, and this is usually the only sign he gets before he stops talking and starts hitting things with his fists.

He tries to breathe through it, focusing his gaze on a round mole on the side of Steve's neck. He can't look up, can't meet his eyes.

"You don't know shit about me, Harrington," he says through gritted teeth, jaw twitching. "You can fuck right off."

Billy turns and heads for his Camaro.

"Hargrove!" Harrington calls after him. He isn't following him, at least.

Billy gets the car back onto the road. He manages to put a few hundred meters between him and Harrington before hot tears fill his

eyes.

3. Chapter Three

His father is still shouting insults when Billy slams the front door behind him and runs.

He runs until he tastes blood in his mouth, then he walks, headed for the town's liquor store.

Despite the fading bruises on his cheek and eye – and a couple of brand new ones hidden under his shirt - he flashes one of his most effective grins at the woman behind the counter. She doesn't ask for his ID.

Half an hour, three beers and half a bottle of vodka later, he's stumbling his way down one of the town's deserted streets, humming Scorpions songs and trying not to throw up.

He doesn't know what time it is. Fuck, he doesn't care, he's not going back to the house tonight.

Let his father take it out on him *again* tomorrow.

A car drives past him in the otherwise empty road, and it's all he can do to not launch himself under it. He's still laughing hysterically at the thought when the car stops abruptly and pulls over to the side.

Billy is considering throwing his half-finished bottle of vodka at it – just to pick a fight – when the driver steps out of the car.

Billy freezes. Steve Harrington.

You've got to be fucking kidding me.

Harrington looks around the street and then back at him, a confused frown forming on his face.

"Hargrove? What the hell are you doing?"

Billy snorts, trying to recover his composure and putting on what he hopes is a smug face.

"Walking. As you can see." The words that come out of his mouth are slurred and slow and make him wince.

"Walking. Alright, what, you decided to go for a stroll at two in the morning?"

"Clearly."

"It's fucking freezing, man, you haven't even got a jacket on you."

Billy looks down at himself and realizes that he is in fact only wearing a light sweater. He hadn't bothered to grab a coat while storming off, his father's shouts ringing loud in his ears. His hands feel frozen all of a sudden.

"Who are you, my mom?" He snarls. "Mom Steve, is that right?"

He tries to wave a mocking hand in Steve's direction but the movement sends him tumbling forward, and he has to grab on to a nearby bench to keep from falling.

"Wait. How drunk are you, Billy?" Steve starts walking towards him.

"Screw you, Harrington." This is so not happening.

"Right. Okay, sure. Screw me. Get in the car, though, I'll drive you home."

Home. Billy laughs at that, sprawling down on the bench.

"Come on." Without Billy noticing, Steve has reached the bench and is now standing in front of him and offering his hand.

Billy looks up at him – wow, the world sure is spinning – and tries to focus on Steve's face.

"You shitting me?" He growls, or tries to, anyway.

"Nope. Come on, Hargrove, I'm freezing out here, get in the car, I'm not leaving your sorry ass to die of hypothermia."

Billy is *sure* he's trying to protest and telling Harrington to fuck off. He's certain he's not getting up and being led to the car.

It's only when a wave of warmth hits him and makes him come back to his senses that he realizes he's sitting in the passenger's seat of Steve Harrington's car.

Steve Harrington's car, filled with Steve Harrington's smell. A mix of cologne and hair product and male scent.

Billy's heart starts racing, panic settling at the pit of his stomach.

Steve is sitting next to him and staring at him with a concerned expression.

Billy can't look at him, now. If he does, his heart will burst.

"Are you alright?" A distant voice asks.

Billy stares at his own hands, sweat collecting on his forehead. He can't be here. He needs to go, he *can't* be here.

He inhales and all he smells is *Steve, Steve, Steve.*

He feels like crying, suddenly, and it only makes him angrier. He needs to break something, he needs to punch someone hard, he needs to undo Steve's fly and swallow his cock.

"Billy. Are you alright?"

Billy is burning, he's boiling from the inside, he feels on fire, lava swimming in his head.

Fuck you, he wants to say, but the words are stuck in his throat and he feels like he's choking. *Fuck me,* he wants to scream. *Make me choke on your cock. Use me, you fucking loser.*

Billy acts before he can stop himself.

He turns to face Steve, pushes him hard so that his back hits the inside of the car door, then goes for his belt.

With shaking fingers, he tries to open Steve's jeans, leaning down to lower his face onto Steve's crotch.

"Stop."

Steve's hands suddenly come down to cover his and are forceful, stilling him and pushing him away.

As soon as Steve touches him, the tears Billy has been holding back come streaming down his face. When he looks up, Steve is watching him with a worried expression, and he's still holding his hands.

Billy's sobs become louder and fill the car.

He needs to get out, just *get out* and go back to his own house and have his father beat his face in again, like he deserves, for this. He needs to--

"Hey. Hey, Billy. Billy." Steve lets go of his hands and Billy feels lost, but then Steve is cradling his face, searching his eyes, and Billy knows there's nothing there but shame and fear.

"Billy. It's okay. Come here, it's okay."

Steve pushes on Billy's head until it's resting on his shoulder. Billy's tears have soaked Steve's jacket by the time his sobs start to subside.

He's clinging to Steve like a drowning man, but he doesn't care. He suddenly feels the weight of all that alcohol. He just wants to rest here, sleep here, with Steve holding him. He just...

When he wakes up, Steve is opening the passenger's door and shaking him gently by the shoulder. He goes willingly.

When he wakes up next, he is in a bed which is not his own, surrounded by a smell he has learned to pick up among a hundred others. His head is pounding, and when he moves his whole body screams in protest.

Billy rolls over on the bed and almost dies right there and then at what he sees.

Steve is on the floor, curled up under a blanket at the foot of the bed, facing him.

His eyes are open.

"Hey."

Billy stays silent. He feels trapped. He wants to crawl out of his skin and disappear into a black hole. Blurred memories of the night before start crowding in his head. *No.*

“Billy-“

“I need to go.” Billy sits up abruptly, shooting out of the bed and frantically grabbing his shoes off the floor, shoving them on.

Steve gets up and moves to stand in front of him, blocking the door.

“Wait. Billy. Listen-“

“I need to go.”

He pushes past Steve and out of the bedroom, runs down the stairs and out of the front door without looking back.

4. Chapter Four

Billy starts actively avoiding Harrington, then, instead of passively ignoring his presence.

He sits at the opposite end of the room during the classes they share, he skips basketball practice whenever he can, and when he can't, he forgoes the shower – the mere thought of being naked in the same room as Harrington makes him want to dig a hole into the tile floor and jump in it.

Harrington doesn't make it easy.

Billy doesn't miss the questioning gazes Steve throws him when Billy bolts from the locker room as soon as they finish practice. He doesn't miss the way Steve's eyes search for his when he walks towards his seat during class.

Steve also stares at him during lunchtime, when Billy is sitting with Tommy and a bunch of other teammates - Steve usually eats with Nancy Wheeler and the Byers weirdo; Billy wonders how fucked up Harrington must be to stay friends with his ex *and* the guy who stole her from him. Billy pretends not to notice when Harrington zones out from whatever conversation he's having at his table, looking in Billy's direction instead. It's not subtle, really, and Billy would laugh if the feeling of Harrington's eyes on him didn't make breathing a little harder.

Despite the persistent staring, Steve hasn't tried talking to Billy, even though it's been a few days. Billy is more than happy to leave it that way.

On Friday, Billy gets home with Max after school and he immediately knows something's wrong. When they approach the house, Billy hears his father and Susan arguing loudly, though he can't make out what they're saying.

He grabs Max by the shoulder, stopping her from opening the front door.

"Don't. Go skate around the block for half an hour," he says, voice

low.

Max looks up at him with nervous eyes and nods, setting off on her skateboard.

Things have slightly improved between him and Max since the night she almost castrated him with that fucking baseball bat. They mostly ignore each other now and Billy has stopped complaining about Max being late after school. He picks her up after letting her hang with those nerdy kids, and when he's in a good mood, he even allows her to choose the music in the car. It's a mutual understanding of sorts.

Max also knows about the beatings Billy's father regularly administers on him, now. She wasn't supposed to – Neil didn't want to scare precious little Max, didn't want her to see his *less fatherly* side, and he had been clear with Billy that he needed to keep his mouth shut.

But Max wasn't stupid. She had caught on after repeatedly hearing thumps during one of Billy and Neil's fights and had noticed some of Billy's bruises afterwards.

She had confronted him about it and Billy had told her the truth, but had also told her to keep quiet because he could handle it, and this was just a "Neil thing" that she didn't need to worry about.

After waiting for Max to reach a safe distance away from the house, Billy stomps out his cigarette and enters the house, making sure to shut the front door loudly enough to be heard. When he walks into the kitchen, he sees Susan sitting at the kitchen table, crying silently, while Neil paces back and forth between the sink and the fridge. He stops when he sees Billy.

"Where's Max?" Neil asks, voice neutral.

Billy waves a hand towards the door. "She'll be home soon. Told me she wanted to get some soda from the grocery store down the road." He looks at Susan, then back at his father. "What's wrong?"

Neil takes a seat at the table, clasping his hands together.

"Who is Lucas Sinclair?"

Fuck.

Billy carefully walks to the sink to wash his hands, trying to feign

indifference. He already knows where this is going.

"Name doesn't sound familiar. Is he supposed to be someone from my school?"

Billy doesn't know how the hell his father has come to know about the Sinclair kid. Max never brings her friends to the house and she has never mentioned him to Neil before. So how the hell --

"He's from Max's class. Came around earlier to ask if she was home," Susan explains, feeble voice trembling.

Shit.

Neil stands up from his chair and walks towards Billy, pointing a finger to his face.

"Why was he asking for Max? Are they friends?"

Billy tries to shrug. "How am I supposed to know?" He hates that his voice already sounds defeated.

Neil grabs him by the neck of his shirt and pushes him against the counter.

"Don't bullshit me, Billy." Neil's voice is low, controlled.

"Yeah, okay, I think they hang out together, sometimes. He's in her group of nerd friends, or something."

Billy knows the blow is coming even before his father raises his hand. When it hits his cheek, still tender from the previous bruise, he almost wants to laugh and spit in Neil's face. Instead, he lowers his head in submission.

"I told you I don't want her to be around *that kind of people*," his father hisses. "I told you to watch who she makes friends with."

"I know." *Then she almost nailed my balls to the floor.*

Neil lets go of him with a shove and walks out of the kitchen.

"Make sure she cuts ties with him. I never want to see his face around here again."

On the drive to school the next morning, Billy doesn't turn on the radio.

The car is quiet; both he and Max are tense and visibly

uncomfortable.

Billy parks the Camaro and kills the engine with a sigh, dragging his hands over his face.

"Max, we need to talk."

Max frowns and crosses her arms, but doesn't get out of the car, waiting.

"About what?" she asks, and Billy can feel she's nervous.

Billy lights a cigarette and takes a long drag, carefully blowing the smoke out of the window, away from Max's face.

"Neil saw the Sinclair kid by our house, yesterday."

Max's face falls for a moment, then the frown comes back, deeper.

"So?"

Billy slams his fist against the steering wheel, making Max jump in her seat. Damn it.

"Max. *Jesus*," Billy starts, and it comes out harsher than he would've wanted. "You have no idea, do you?" He feels like laughing hysterically.

Max is staring at her feet. "I know that you're an asshole and you don't like Lucas, but—"

"I don't give two shits about *Lucas*, Max." Billy takes another drag from his cigarette, fingers shaking. "When I told you—when I told you that you couldn't hang out with him, it wasn't because I didn't like him. Jesus, do you think I give a fuck who you hang out with?"

Max throws her hands in the air. "Then what—"

"It's *Neil*, Max. My father. He doesn't like people like Lucas."

"People like Lucas?"

"*Black people*, Max." Billy lowers his head, because saying it out loud is way harder than expected. "He hates black people, so add that to his pile of wonderful qualities. And apparently I'm in charge of overseeing who you can and cannot be friends with."

They're quiet for a long time, Max looking out of the window and Billy nervously playing with his lighter.

Max eventually turns to Billy, face soft and worried. "Did he hit you again?"

Billy's throat clenches. "Don't worry about that. It's fine."

Max nods, slowly.

Billy sighs. "Just... just tell Sinclair not to come by the house again, okay? You can hang out with him, just—just do it where my father can't see you."

"Okay."

“And...” Billy turns on his seat, head hanging low, pointedly not meeting Max’s eyes. “Tell Sinclair that I’m sorry. About that night. I shouldn’t have taken it out on him.”

Max’s brows threaten to fly off her face, but when she speaks, her tone is teasing.

“You could tell him yourself, you know?”

Billy barks out a laugh, raising his head. “Do not stretch it, kid.” He points to the passenger’s door. “Now get out of my car.”

5. Chapter Five

It's a cold, rainy day, and Billy hates rain. It fucks up his hair, makes it all frizzy and shit, and it has him shaking like a wet dog. He still hasn't adjusted to the weather in Hawkins and his wardrobe hasn't either. When the last bell of the morning rings, Billy makes a run for his car in the parking lot, head bowed against the wind.

"Too cool for an umbrella?"

Billy looks up just in time not to slam right into Harrington, who is standing next to the Camaro and is holding a green polka-dotted umbrella over his head. He looks ridiculous.

"Think you can get me one like yours? I'm digging the Smurf look," Billy offers with a sneer, searching his soaked pockets for the car keys. He hears Steve snort.

Keys in hand, Billy nods sideways. "Get the fuck off my car, Harrington."

Steve sighs and pinches his nose. "Nice. And here I thought we could have a civil conversation for once." His tone is light, making Billy itchy all over.

"I don't need to have a conversation with you."

Harrington raises his hands in surrender. "Alright. Listen, man, don't think that—"

"I'm not thinking anything," Billy hisses, pointing a tense finger up to Steve's face. "And you shouldn't either." He shoves Steve to the side and opens the car door.

A hand on his shoulder stops him and Billy spins around; that dangerous, stinging feeling back under his skin. Steve lets go when he notices the look in Billy's eyes. They are burning wild, glistening with barely repressed rage.

"Billy," he starts. "Can you just hear me out for one second?"

Billy swallows around the knot in his throat and clenches his hands

into fists at his sides.

Easy, now.

“No, Harrington,” he says, his voice barely controlled. “I’m gonna tell you again: mind your own fucking business. You wanna play *white knight*, find someone else.”

Billy gets in the car and slams the door shut.

Steve leans towards the window. “I’m not playing white knight.”

Billy grins and drags his tongue over his teeth.

“Could’ve fooled me. Now fuck off.”

Steve looks as if he’s about to press the matter, brows knitted together and jaw working, but before he can respond, Max runs up to the car, taking shelter from the rain under Steve’s umbrella.

“Hi, Steve...?” She looks between Steve and Billy with a perplexed expression. “You need a ride or something?” Billy is pointedly looking at the steering wheel.

Steve shakes his head and gives her the polka-dotted umbrella, raising his backpack above his head. “I was just leaving. See you at Mike’s later, okay?”

He jogs off and Max flops into the car with a huff, carefully folding the umbrella under the passenger’s seat. She looks at Billy. “What was that about?”

Billy is still staring forward, hands twitching on the wheel.

“Nothing. You ready to go?”

After practice, Matt - one of Billy’s teammates - announces he’s throwing a party on Saturday because his parents are out of town. The whole senior year is going to be there, he promises, and it’s going to be a blast.

On Saturday night, Billy drives to the guy’s house with the specific intention of getting shitfaced. He’s been vibrating in his own skin for days, desperate for some kind of *release*. It doesn’t help that every

time he tries to jerk off, the memory of Harrington's hands on him resurfaces, taking over his thoughts until there's no space left. Steady hands holding Billy through his sobs and gently caressing down his spine, cradling his face, grounding him until he could breathe again.

It's like a woodworm gnawing at Billy's brain, a clinking sound in the back of his head he can't seem to shut off. So Billy's going to get very drunk on free alcohol, dance his ass off and forget about Steve fucking Harrington for one night.

Of course Harrington is at the fucking party.

Billy spots him within three minutes after walking through the door, beer in hand, surrounded by some of their teammates. He's wearing his stupid sunglasses and his head – and hair – is bouncing to Wham's *Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go*.

Billy's tempted to leave right then, but Tommy is striding towards him, handing him a red plastic cup.

"Hargrove! About time you showed up," Tommy yells in his ear. "Place is full of hot chicks, man, and there's so much free booze."

Billy stops listening after that, downing whatever shit cocktail the cup contained in one go.

He pats Tommy on the back as a way to excuse himself and makes a beeline for the table at the far end of the room, where he can see a bunch of liquor bottles. He fills his cup to the brim with gin and heads to the backyard.

After an hour of drinking and dancing, Billy starts to feel better. His vision is swimming, his head feels light, he's jumping to the rhythm of trashy pop songs and... he hasn't seen Harrington in a while.

The thought hits him like a cold shower and Billy hates that he notices.

He needs more booze.

He disentangles himself from the swarming crowd of sweaty teenagers and makes his way back to the liquor table, only to find it

empty. Billy groans and drags a hand down his face, scanning the room. There'll probably be more alcohol in the kitchen.

Stumbling a little, he squeezes through the dancing floor towards what he assumes is the corridor that leads to the other part of the house.

Once he gets to the kitchen, which is occupied by a small group of guys drunkenly attempting to make grilled cheese toasts, Billy raids the cabinets until he finds a stack of beer bottles. A-ha.

Satisfied with his prize and not willing to share it with the rest of the party – he's come here to get shitfaced, after all, and he's not even halfway there yet – he saunters around the house and then heads upstairs, aiming to find a quiet bedroom where he can peacefully drink himself into a stupor.

He's dragging himself through one of the corridors, walking past a couple talking in hushed tones against the wall. He has a hand on the door to one of the bedrooms, when he hears a sudden cry and a feeble female voice coming from behind him.

"Please, let's just go back downstairs," the voice says, and it's laced with uneasiness.

Billy turns his head around and eyes the couple he had ignored just moments before. He sees the girl – Sandy, Billy remembers; she's one of his classmates, sometimes sits behind him in maths – plastered to the wall, head lowered and a hand raised in front of her, trying to push the guy away.

The guy, Billy realizes, is not from their school. Billy has never seen him before and he looks older, definitely not a teenager. He's crowding Sandy, towering over her and has his hands on her hips, a sly grin painted on his face.

"You backing out, now, sweetheart? That's not cool," the guy says, mouth curled into a leer.

Billy lets go of the door handle and slowly moves closer to the couple, hand gripping the box of beers tighter.

The girl-- *Sandy*, is visibly shaking now, tears making her eyes glisten in the dim light of the hallway. Billy puts the beers on the ground and moves to stand behind the guy.

“Is there a problem, here?” he asks, conversationally.

The guy – he’s way taller than Billy, and broader – turns his head, face distorted into an annoyed expression. “No problem here, dude. Move along.”

Sandy looks up and over the guy’s shoulder, throwing a pleading glance at Billy.

“I don’t think so, pal,” Billy remarks, grinning widely and resting a hand on his belt. “Let the lady go back downstairs.”

The guy finally turns to face him.

“What the fuck’s your problem? I said, *move along*.”

Billy doesn’t budge, shifting his attention towards Sandy, instead.

“Sandy, right? Go ahead, this douche won’t bother you anymore—”

Billy stumbles backwards, the guy’s fist connecting with his face with a hard *thump*.

He blames the alcohol for his delay in reflexes, because he definitely should’ve seen that coming.

Billy laughs, tongue running over his bloodied front teeth, and charges towards the guy.

He hears Sandy let out a scream and run down the stairs. Good.

Billy launches himself at the older man, throwing a punch to his jaw and sending him crashing against the wall. He’s drunk, though, vision blurry at the edges and hands not quite steady. Billy doesn’t see the man grab the lamp on a nearby table until it’s too late and he’s already aiming for another punch. The lamp cracks against his head and breaks.

Billy falls to his knees, stunned. He’s gasping for air, blood trickling down his temple, and he can’t get up, limbs failing him. The guy kicks him in the ribs, again and again, and Billy can only take it, curling up on the floor and trying to crawl away.

“Hey! Stop!” a voice behind him shouts.

Billy hears hurried footsteps coming up the stairs and when he looks up, there’s a small crowd gathered in the hallway, putting themselves between him and the guy, who has finally stopped hitting him.

Billy recognizes his teammates and Sandy behind them, still trembling. He also sees Steve Harrington, and he feels the need to chuckle.

Harrington and a couple of other guys, including Matt – the host -- plant themselves in front of the man.

“Get the fuck out of my house, or we’re calling the police,” Matt threatens, and the man lets out a laugh. “Whatever,” he huffs, shoving past them and disappearing down the flight of stairs.

Billy is trying to get up, leaning against the wall for support, when he feels strong hands grip his arm to pull him up. It’s Harrington.

“I’ve got him,” Harrington says, throwing Billy’s arms over his shoulders. “I’ve got him. Matt, where’s the bathroom? I gotta check on him. You guys can go back to the party.”

And just like that, Billy’s being dragged – more like *carried*, if he’s being honest – down the hallway and into the bathroom.

Harrington locks the door and makes him sit on the edge of the bathtub, gently propping him down. Billy doesn’t bother protesting and closes his eyes to fight the incessant pounding of his head. He hears Harrington shuffle around the room and when he opens his eyes, he sees him fishing out a first aid kit from the cabinet.

Harrington grabs the plastic stool near the shower and places it in front of Billy, sitting down on it to face him.

“Stay still, now, you’re bleeding from your temple. I have to clean it,” Harrington says, voice neutral but his brows betraying a tinge of worry.

Billy hears himself snort. “*White knight*, ” he mumbles, angling his face forward to give Harrington better access.

Steve doesn't reply, focusing his gaze on Billy's head instead. He raises a wet gauze to his temple and starts wiping it softly. Billy winces at the sting and tries to pull away, but a firm hand comes up to grab his chin and keep him still.

He can feel Harrington's warm breath on his cheek and Billy has to keep himself from shaking.

A couple of minutes pass, Steve poring over Billy's injuries and Billy trying to focus on breathing evenly.

Eventually, Harrington breaks the silence.

"It was good," he says, voice low and soft. "What you did."

It takes a while for Billy to register what Harrington is saying, then he remembers. He's talking about the girl, Sandy.

Billy closes his eyes again, just to avoid looking at Harrington. "I don't like that shit," he mutters, then hisses when Steve dabs at a deep cut on his cheek. Just how bad had that creep fucked up his face, exactly?

Harrington grimaces in apology and puts the last piece of gauze down.

"He got you pretty good with that lamp," he says, as if reading Billy's mind.

Harrington releases his chin and Billy has to stop himself from whining at the loss. He hadn't realized he was leaning into it.

Billy's about to get up when Steve's hand returns, gentle, on his jaw.

"Wait. I've missed one," he whispers, leaning closer. Billy sucks in a sharp breath, then stops breathing altogether.

He's sure Harrington can feel him shaking under his hand, but he can't help it.

They're so close Billy can smell Harrington's cologne and his breath, a mix of cheap beer and mint chewing gum. He can see the sweat on Harrington's neck and he wants to lick it off his skin.

Billy forces himself to look up and finds Harrington staring at him, eyes wide. His hand is still on Billy's jaw and his thumb moves to

graze along his bottom lip.

"Billy..." Harrington whispers, voice trembling, and Billy *gasps* because suddenly he can't breathe.

Then Steve is leaning forward, pressing his mouth to Billy's.

Billy thinks about shoving Harrington off. He thinks about pushing him in the chest and bolting from the room. He thinks about punching him in the face repeatedly and screaming at him.

Instead, he *whines* into the kiss, grabbing Steve's face in a vicious grip.

Harrington had started the kiss tenderly, his mouth soft on Billy's, but it's not enough. Billy angles his face to the side and opens his mouth, sliding his tongue along Steve's. It elicits a low moan from Steve and Billy wants to *devour* him.

Billy stands up abruptly, ignoring the residual pain in his chest and abdomen, and pushes against Steve without breaking the kiss, until Steve's back hits the rim of the bathroom sink.

He trails his mouth along Steve's jaw, then down his neck, savoring the way Steve's breath becomes ragged and his hands come up to tangle his Billy's hair. Billy *wants*.

He bites down on the junction between Steve's neck and shoulder, then drops to his knees, ignoring the way his body aches from the beating.

"What are you doing?" Harrington asks, voice hoarse.

Billy doesn't answer, undoing Steve's belt and fly, hands swift despite the alcohol in his body. He fears Steve might stop him, but when he glances up, Steve is looking at him with wild eyes, mouth slack.

"I'm gonna suck you off," Billy mouths into Steve's hip. He lowers Steve's jeans and his mouth waters at the sight of the boy's dick through his underwear, already hard and tenting the fabric.

Bracing his hands on Harrington's hips, he mouths at him through the cotton, and he hears Steve suck in a shaky breath. Billy pulls the underwear down, releasing Steve's dick, and gets a hand around it,

giving it a tug.

He looks up and meets Steve's gaze, which has gone half-lidded and unfocused.

That's all the confirmation Billy needs. He leans down and wraps his mouth around Steve's dick, pushing forwards until he feels the head hit the back of his throat.

Steve's breath hitches. His left hand comes down to tangle in Billy's locks and *pulls*.

Billy whimpers around Steve's dick and leans into the touch, closing his eyes to the sensation.

He starts bobbing his head slowly, rhythmically dragging his tongue on the underside of Steve's shaft and around the head. His own dick is throbbing inside his pants.

Steve brings his other hand to cup Billy's cheek and Billy realizes the other boy can *feel* himself moving inside Billy's mouth. It's almost enough to make him come untouched.

Harrington is moaning quietly above him, his breath coming in hitches, head thrown back.

His hips start to thrust in time with Billy's movements and his hand grips Billy's hair tighter.

"Billy..." Harrington breathes, and he's pushing at Billy's shoulder. "Billy, I'm—"

Billy goes faster then, swallowing around Steve's dick with each thrust, and he can feel Harrington go rigid, hips stuttering, his come pouring down Billy's throat.

Billy goes down one more time, then pulls off and buries his face in Steve's groin, inhaling.

He presses a lingering kiss to Steve's hip, eyes closed, then tucks him back into his jeans.

He stands up in one quick movement and moves to turn to the door, but a hand on his arm stops him.

Harrington pushes off the sink and crowds into Billy's space, his eyes dark and mouth half-open. He raises a hand to Billy's face and drags

his thumb across his cheekbone, then lowers his other hand to cup Billy through his trousers. Billy can feel him trembling.

He shakes his head.

“Don’t worry about it, Harrington,” Billy says around a smirk, gently pulling away.

He lingers a few more moments, watching the pink flush on Harrington’s neck and cheeks, basking in the thought that *he did this* , then forces himself to turn and head to the door.

“See you around, Harrington,” Billy throws behind his shoulder, walking out of the bathroom and down the stairs, out into the freezing night breeze.

Notes for the Chapter:

I totally googled "pop songs 1984", yep.